



STATE OF WASHINGTON
COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS
COMISIÓN DE ASUNTOS HISPANOS

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Uriel Iñiguez,
Acting Executive
Director

August 5, 2004

A number of weeks ago we sent a letter to you outlining our concerns over current immigration policy. We are writing to you, once again, to communicate additional concerns raised over Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) activities conducted in Washington State, and to urge you to support comprehensive immigration reform.

The ICE began conducting 'limited' immigration actions throughout the State of Washington on July 1, 2004. From the outset of their activities, the Commission on Hispanic Affairs has received numerous reports that ICE was performing widespread immigration raids. ICE agents allegedly questioned and detained Latino individuals at public places such as Wal-Mart, Safeway and Albertson stores as well as local laundromats and child care centers. There were rumors of roadblocks leading toward orchards and fruit packing warehouses. This resulted in many workers not showing up for work for several days, which debilitated orchard owners and warehouse managers and delayed fruit shipments. We believe that ICE should have taken a more direct role in reducing the panic caused by the rumors.

Though many of these rumors have not been substantiated, the fear experienced by the Latino community was very real and highlights the need for comprehensive immigration policy reform now. As you may be aware, the Agricultural Jobs bill, S.1645, is currently before Congress. This bill would allow agricultural workers (and their immediate family) in the United States, who lack immigration status to become eligible for permanent resident status if certain work requirements are met. We urge your support of this legislation as a first step toward comprehensive reform.

Latino/Hispanic immigrants are vital to Washington state's economy and deserve to live and work without fear.

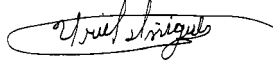
Again, we urge you to support S. 1645 and continue to push for comprehensive immigration reform that lifts barriers facing all immigrants and protects immigrant workers and their families.

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Commission on Hispanic Affairs
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We appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have further questions or if I can be of assistance, please contact me.

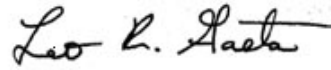
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Uriel Iñiguez", enclosed within a simple oval outline.

Uriel Iñiguez
Acting Executive Director

Attachments

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leo L. Gaeta", written in a cursive style.

Leo Gaeta
Chair